

COMMERCE AND THE MAILES IN THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY

1800-1860: Growth and Change

- Population sextupled
- Number of states doubled
- Significant increase in literacy
- Transportation: Coach to rail, sail to steam
- New businesses springing up, growing fast
- Growing demand for communication
- Postal operations determine how companies communicate
- Business needs drive evolution of postal operations

Evolution of Postal Operations

- Domestic rate changes
- Rise and fall of local posts
- Trans-Atlantic rate changes
- Establishment of registered mail



Nathan Puffer

Nathan Trotter & Co.

- Buyer/importer of bulk metals – lead, zinc, tin, copper et al.
- Maker of metal products such as kettles, faucets, wire, rivets, shot, pigs
- Seller to small manufacturing firms in the region
- Sales volume quadrupled by 1850
- Family owned and operated – still going
- One of the oldest companies in the US



Front Street Facade

Under historic preservation

Domestic Single Sheet Letter Rates Act of March 2, 1799

Not over 40 miles	8 cents
40 to 90 miles	10 cents
90 to 150 miles	12-1/2 cents
150 to 300 miles	17 cents
300 to 500 miles	20 cents
over 500 miles	25 cents

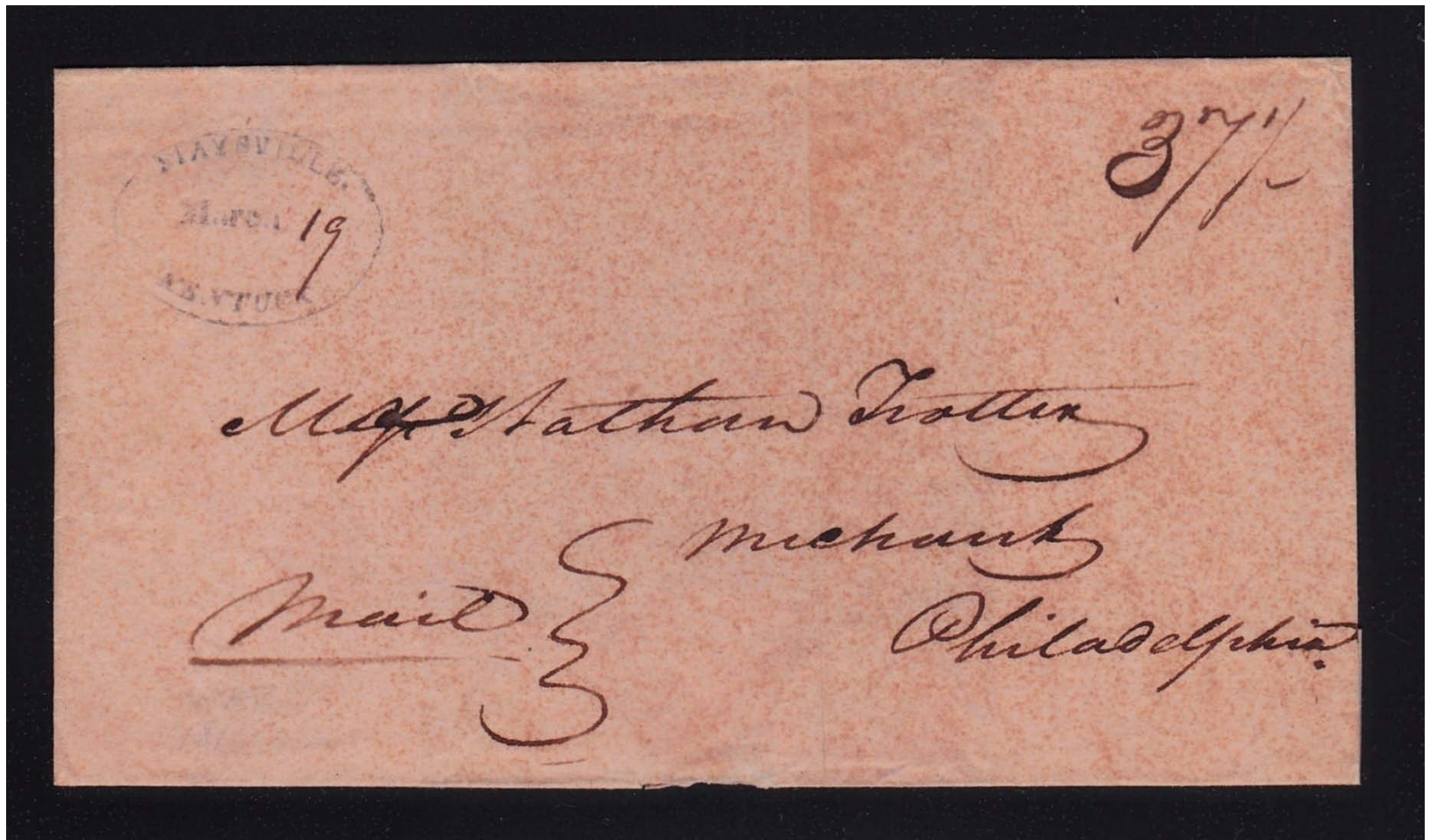
Domestic Single Sheet Letter Rates Act of March 2, 1799 (In 2002 dollars)

Not over 40 miles	\$1.60
40 to 90 miles	\$2.00
90 to 150 miles	\$2.50
150 to 300 miles	\$3.40
300 to 500 miles	\$4.00
over 500 miles	\$5.00

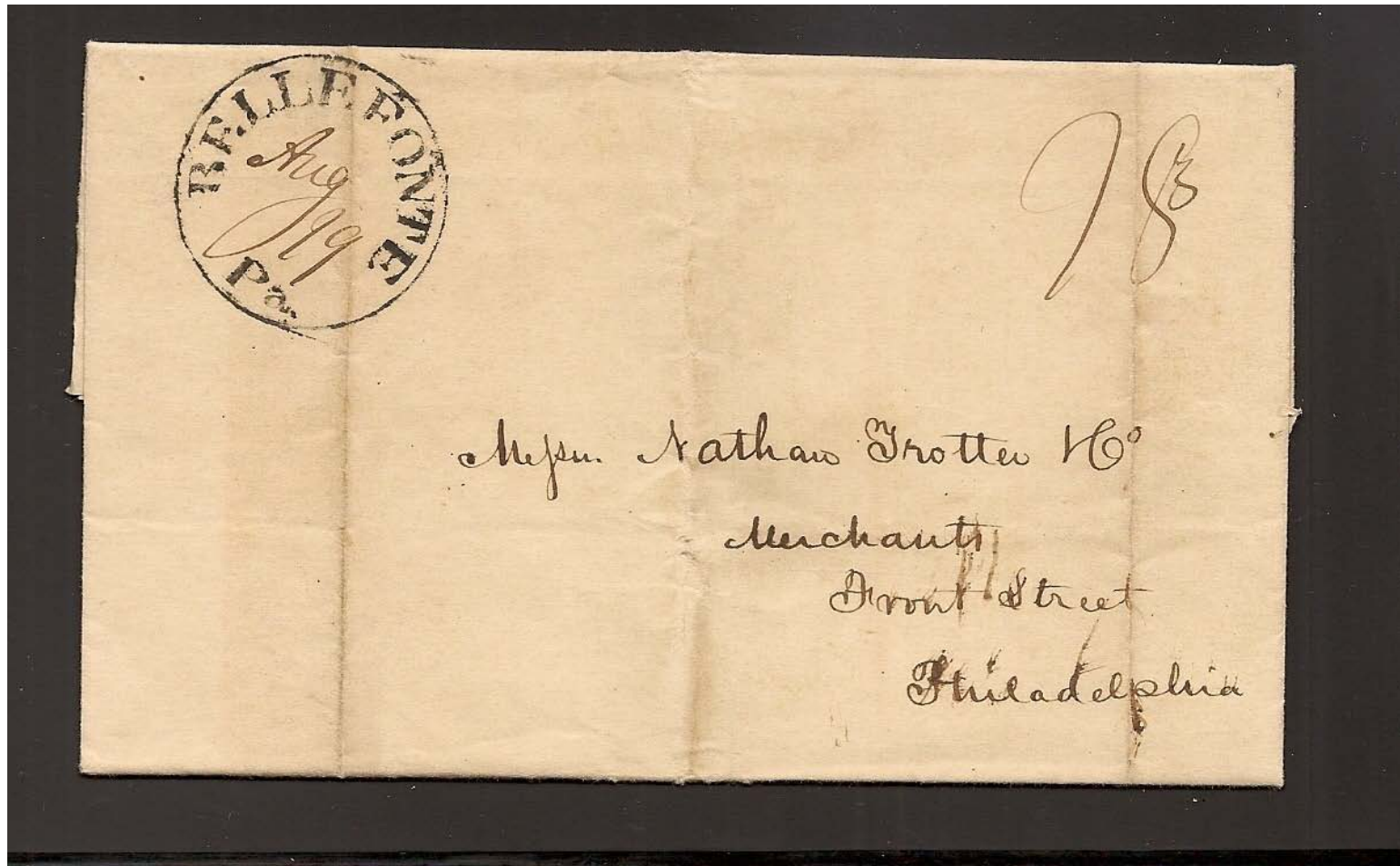
1803 New York – 12-1/2 cents
for 90-150 miles



1816 Maysville, KY, war rate –
37-1/2 cents for over 500 miles



1844 Bellefonte, PA - 18-3/4 cents
for 150-400 miles



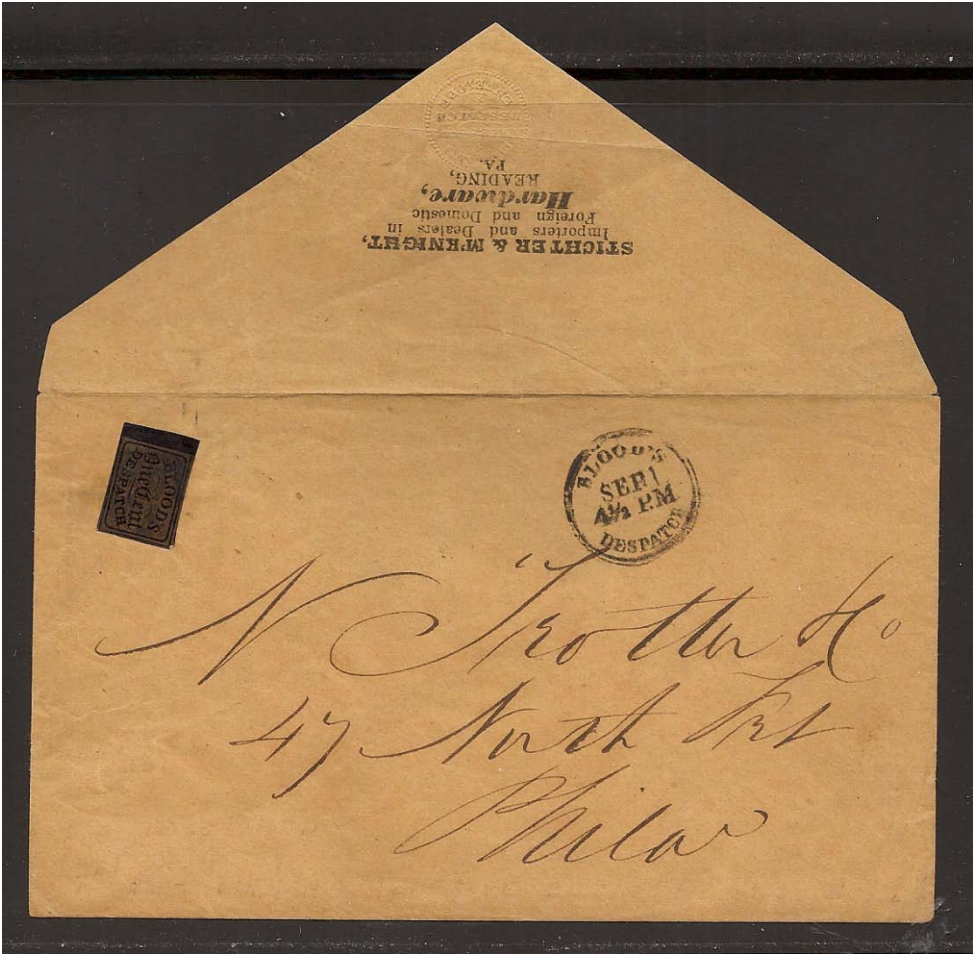
1845 Bellefonte, PA - 5 cents
reform rate for up to 300 miles



1851-55 Camden, Del. – 3 cents prepaid



1852-53 Blood's Despatch, Reading to Philadelphia – one cent



Trans-Atlantic Rates

- Private Ship Letters
- Postal Reform Rates
- Treaty Rates

1819 American Packet Ship Letter –
27 cents for two sheets plus ship fee



1843 Ship Letter from Liverpool –
British reform rate 16 cents (8 pence) plus
12-1/2 cents NY-Phil. = 28-1/2 cents



1853 American Packet from Liverpool– British treaty
Rate 24 cents not prepaid, 3 cents credited to Britain



1854 British Packet from Swansea,. Wales –
Treaty rate one shilling (24 cents) prepaid, 5 cents credited to US



1870 Pontypridd, Wales – British Treaty Rate 3 pence (6 cents)



Registered Mail

- Security for valuable mail
- Special handling but no indemnity
- Ad hoc markings by post offices
- Departmental regulation

1845 Lewistown, PA "Rec" (orded) –
Phila. large blue "R", double strike



1848 Hollidaysburg, PA “secret” registry
mark – large blue “R”



1850 Stroudsburgh, PA registry number 25
– small blue “R”



1851 Lancaster, PA "R", "No 39" –
small red "R"



Commerce and the Mails in the Early 19th Century - Conclusion

- Growing need for communication
- Dramatically reduced cost of mailing, both domestic and Trans-Atlantic
- Private carriers come and go
- Registry established for valuable mail
- Well-preserved correspondence sheds light on both business practices and postal operations